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PRESIDENT ROBAK: The Chair recognizes Senator Avery to open on his amendment.

SENATOR AVERY: Okay, thank you, Madam President. To introduce I guess LB 642, I'll try to give you kind of a rundown on actually what it does and where I came in actually putting it together. I was, as well as many others were, involved in an interim study looking at some what is duplica...well, it was duplication what entailed costs between and some potential what was conflicts between the Department of Social Services and the Foster Care Review Board. As a result of that study, there was a report put out. I...the committee, it was a fairly loose committee, and I don't...I never believed that we agreed totally on what should be there and what shouldn't be there. We had some suggestions. We asked both sides to bring some proposals, and what came out of the committee in terms of report and one of the bills that was there was to emphasize and try to put a hammer on what the intent of the committee was trying to force DSS and foster care to work together. And the one bill was the hammer. I looked at the process and I said we have to make a major change for the benefit of children in the State of Nebraska, and that is where I come in terms of instigating what we needed to do. LB 462 (sic) actually puts the responsibility finally on one entity to do the reviews. It makes sure that every child, I believe, will get a review, an external citizen review, which this body, about 12 years ago, decided was the best way. And a little history I will try to relate to you is that 12 years ago the department thought there was something like I think 1,800 youth in the system. Through a tracking system developed by the Foster Care Review Board, they found 3,200 or thereabouts. So, consequently, we had a problem. There was a lot of children falling through the cracks. What the bill does, bottom line, is that it transfers and makes the Foster Care Review Board responsible and liable for the reviews. In order to do that, I feel foster care has never been adequately funded to do its task as is in statute. In addition, what the bill will do is transfer ten DSS staff and the appropriate funding in order to do what the Legislature originally intended for that board to do. With the passage of LB 460 or 642, we, I would hope that it will provide protection to a citizen review to 1,600 additional children. It will end the duplication of two internal DSS reviews per child per year. It is intended to make sure we meet the federal guidelines that